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Summary of Community Conversations in North End/Waterfront

The following is a summary of some of the main points of participants in Boston 400's community meetings in North End/Waterfront. These ideas do not constitute a planning document or a community consensus, but rather an overview of the many options and how these options fit into the larger community context. This summary offers points of discussion for the development of a citywide plan. These ideas will be presented to the public in the form of a tabloid publication, which will be distributed widely, and in open forums to be announced at a later date. Please direct suggestions for further development of this summary to Rick Shaklik at the Boston Redevelopment Authority by phone (617-722-4300, extension 4312), fax (617-367-6087), email (richard.shaklik.bra@ci.boston.ma.us), or mail (Boston 400, Boston Redevelopment Authority, One City Hall Square, Boston, MA 02201). For more information about Boston 400, visit our web site (www.ci.boston.ma.us/boston400/boston40.htm).

Business and Activity Centers

Focus Areas	Issues and Opportunities	Possible Responses	Neighborhood and City Context
Salem and Hanover Streets commercial district	Salem and Hanover Streets are the focus of community business, restaurants, and cafes providing a mix of activities for the neighborhood.	Strengthen the business district by encouraging retail and service uses that serve the local community as well as visitors. Encourage storefront and sign improvements and maintain the North End's unique character.	Salem and Hanover Streets comprise the principal commercial district in the North End and improvements will enhance the economic vitality and image of the neighborhood and city.
Street Lighting	Neighborhood has a variety of street lighting types, many of which are not consistent with the historic character of the neighborhood	Develop a comprehensive street lighting scheme for the neighborhood appropriate to its historic character	The North End is an important historic neighborhood and tourist attraction.
Signage	Street signs are missing, erratically sited and add to the visual clutter of the neighborhood.	Implement a system for placing street signs on buildings. Signs can be grouped together in clusters.	Improved signage is a citywide issue and a new system in the North End could serve as a prototype for similar neighborhoods.
Street trees	Street trees provide shade and green in a densely developed neighborhood with minimal open space.	Street trees should be planted throughout the neighborhood to provide a consistent green canopy	Enhanced livability and appearance.
Litter	Trash on streets and sidewalks detracts from quality of life and creates a negative impression for visitors. Not much space on sidewalks for trash receptacles.	Mechanical street sweeping and appropriately placed litter baskets would help improve neighborhood cleanliness. Design of trash receptacles should reflect narrowness of sidewalk.	Increased cleanliness will improve the image of the neighborhood and city. Litter is a particularly acute problem because of neighbor's role as a tourist site/area. Many take-out restaurants.
Neighborhood character	The North End is one of the cities oldest neighborhoods with a historic street pattern and buildings representing the various centuries of the Boston's history.	Explore with Boston Landmarks Commission ways of protecting the North End's historic character, including possible historic district designation, while	The architecture, scale and density of the North End contribute to its special character as a unique downtown neighborhood and visitor destination.

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	There are some requests to supersede height restrictions.	not overly burdening property owners with new regulations. Determine support within North End for architectural preservation measures. Stick to 55' height restriction.	

Parks and Open Spaces

Focus Areas	Issues and Opportunities	Possible Responses	Neighborhood and City Context
Parks and open space maintenance	Several North End open space areas need improved maintenance to maximize benefit to the community, including Tunnel Park on Richmond Street, Tot lot near skating rink, and Mirabella Pool. Other parks, such as Cutillo Playground, could benefit from design revisions and capital improvements to improve appearance and utilization.	Improve maintenance. Provide trash cans throughout parks. Better enforcement of loitering laws to keep homeless from open space areas (such as near Marriot Hotel) and at T structure behind the Charthouse. Greater interdepartmental cooperation and coordination.	Community appearance and usage will benefit from improved maintenance.
Park Facilities	Public restrooms are needed in parks as well as elsewhere in the community to serve residents and tourists.	Reopen restrooms on the Prado, establish pay toilets at key spots in the community, include public restrooms in the Parcel 7 vent building. Restroom attendents should be considered possibly sponsored by area businesses or paid through advertising.	Visitor accommodations are necessary to adequately serve and encourage the tourist economy.
Waterfront Access	Expand resident and visitor access, both physical and visual to the waterfront.	Complete Harborwalk through public initiatives such as city's proposed development of Harborwalk at Sargents Wharf and private development such as the Pilot House Extension and Battery Wharf. Insure compliance with zoning guidelines requiring open space, setbacks and access. Develop Harborwalk along Pupulo Park.	Essential links in city-wide Harborwalk system.
Alleyways	North End has many narrow alleys that could be developed to enhance and	Create a system of landscaped pedestrian walkways such as Greenough Lane. This	Enhancement of open space system.

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	connect the open space system in this densely developed neighborhood.	walkway system could provide streetscape improvements such as paving, lighting, and landscaping and connect activity areas and open space.	
Programming	Effective programming of open space areas encourages efficient and projective use of the park system.	Continue and expand programs such as summer jazz and blues concerts at Waterfront Park and develop ways to increase usage of areas such as the Prado as community gathering place and interpretive area for tourists.	Maximize use of open space resources.
New open space	Realize opportunities for additional community open space and facilities as part of proposed transportation improvements and waterfront development.	Maximize open space development along the waterfront and over depressed Central Artery with facilities that serve and enhance the North End neighborhood.	North End is a densely development neighborhood with significant visitor population and limited open space resources.
Dogs	Facilities for dogs are necessary to accommodate dog owners and protect and maintain parks for other users.	Develop dog run behind skating rink.	Effective utilization of open space resources requires facilities for all users.

Transportation

Focus Areas	Issues and Opportunities	Possible Responses	Neighborhood and City Context
Traffic and parking	Neighborhood is congested with automobiles that cause pollution and safety problems by blocking streets and sidewalks.	Increase parking violation fees (presently not much higher than off-street parking facilities) and enforcement, particularly in the evenings and weekends. Regulate deliveries to off-peak times	Reduction of auto congestion will improve air quality and the overall quality of life in the North End and city.
Parking for residents	Residents require additional off-street parking and opportunities for short-term double parking.	Encourage residents to use parking garages around the neighborhood with incentives and promotion. Allow very short term parking for deliveries to residents.	Maximize use of existing resources to mitigate resident parking problem.
Tourist and visitor access	Encourage visitors to park in perimeter garages, to walk or take mass transit to discourage traffic and parking congestion and through traffic.	Develop system of signage/maps identifying off-street parking facilities and alternative means of transport.	Reduction in congestion.
Bus parking	Increasing numbers of tourists will	Plan for adequate bus parking areas that	Accommodate tourists and allow the

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	generate need for tour bus parking areas near major visitor attractions such as the Old North Church and Paul Revere House.	do not conflict with other community activities or compromise public safety. Enforce bus regulations concerning turning off engines. (note: conflict may develop between new funeral home and Commercial Street bus parking area).	visitor economy to grow without unduly impacting the neighborhood.
Pedestrian Access	Dangerous intersections, conflicts with vehicles and poor quality pedestrian connections with other districts, discourage pedestrian travel to the North End. Particular problems exist at intersections with major streets surrounding the neighborhood such as Cross Street, North Washington Street and Commercial Street. The problem is magnified with double parking, .parking on sidewalks and bus parking which tends to obscure visibility even on some smaller interior neighborhood streets.	Improve pedestrian connections as part of transportation improvements underway.	Strengthen connections with other districts.